Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

10 May 2017

Original: Chinese/English

First session
Vienna, 2-12 May 2017

Nuclear-weapon-free zones and nuclear issues in the Middle East

Working paper submitted by China

1. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is of great significance in promoting nuclear disarmament, preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and maintaining global and regional peace, security and stability.

2. The international community should actively support efforts by relevant countries to establish nuclear-weapons-free zones, based on the article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the guidelines on establishing nuclear-weapons-free zones adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1999.

3. The nuclear-weapon States should undertake unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones and conclude an international legal instrument in this regard.

4. The nuclear-weapon States should respect the legal status of nuclear-weapon-free zones and sign and ratify the protocols to the relevant treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones. This year we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), and China appreciates its great contribution to promoting the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and to enhancing global peace and security. China firmly supports the efforts of the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to build a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Southeast Asia and is willing to sign as early as possible a protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone once it is open for signature.

5. Regional security and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, are closely interrelated. All parties concerned should make further efforts to promote the peace process in the Middle East in a spirit of reconciliation and cooperation in order to enhance peace and stability in the region.

6. While facilitating the reconciliation and cooperation of the countries of the Middle East and promoting the Middle East peace process, the international community should continue to attach importance to and support relevant proposals

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and efforts to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Concrete efforts should be made to promote the establishment of such a zone in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions, the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (see NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex), and relevant provisions of the Final Documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. Relevant States should be encouraged to adopt flexible and practical measures to break the deadlock and promote the early convening of an international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

7. Israel should accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State and place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. The States concerned in the region should sign and ratify comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA and be encouraged to sign and ratify the additional protocols thereto. All these measures are of great importance for strengthening the international non-proliferation regime and promoting the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

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Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons

Working paper submitted by China

1. The prevention of nuclear weapons proliferation is an effective and necessary step towards the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and has a direct bearing on global and regional peace and stability, as well as on the well-being of all peoples. The root causes of nuclear proliferation are complex, and both the causes and the symptoms of nuclear proliferation should be addressed through an integrated approach. The efforts for nuclear non-proliferation should be strengthened within the framework of global nuclear governance.

2. States should seek universal security and eliminate root causes of nuclear proliferation. They should discard zero-sum thinking and the cold war mindset, establish a security concept that is common, integrated, cooperative and sustainable, and embrace the idea of the community of common destiny for mankind. They should fully respect and accommodate the legitimate security concern of each State and spare no efforts in building up a peaceful and stable international environment.

3. The issue of nuclear proliferation should be addressed peacefully through political and diplomatic means. States should stick to dialogue and negotiation within the framework of existing international laws and refrain from reflexively resorting to sanctions or the use or threat of force and should not use non-proliferation as an excuse for pursuing other aims.

4. All States should abandon double standards and opportunism; uphold the authority of the nuclear non-proliferation regime; ensure comprehensive, faithful and balanced compliance with all obligations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; avoid setting non-proliferation standards according to the existence or absence of affinities between States; uphold multilateralism and continuously reinforce the fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory nature of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime on the basis of universal participation and democratic decision-making; take seriously the issue of the severe imbalance between supply and demand for nuclear materials in individual countries and adopt effective measures to address it.

5. The status of the Treaty as the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime should be consolidated and strengthened, so as to enhance

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the authority and effectiveness of the Treaty and ensure that the relevant provisions of the Treaty are fully abided by.

6. The universality of the Treaty should be enhanced, and countries that have not yet joined the Treaty should do so as non-nuclear-weapon States as soon as possible and place all of their nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in accordance with Treaty provisions.

7. The role of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations and mechanisms should be fully utilized, and Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1887 (2009) should be earnestly implemented. Earnest efforts should be made to promote the universality of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols. All countries should further enhance their nuclear export control mechanisms and support the efforts of the Zangger Committee and the Nuclear Suppliers Group in this regard.

8. All States should observe the principles of fairness and balance and properly handle the relationship between nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Any measures taken to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should not undermine the legitimate rights of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy; all proliferation activities carried out under the pretext of peaceful use should be prohibited.

9. One of the root causes of hot-spot nuclear proliferation issues is that the security concerns of relevant countries are not equally respected. The Iranian nuclear issue and the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula have direct bearing on the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and on the peace and stability of relevant regions.

10. In this regard, China welcomes the progress made since the implementation day of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The Plan of Action is an international agreement concluded by the E3/EU+3 and the Islamic Republic of Iran after long-term tough negotiations and has been endorsed by the Security Council. All parties should strengthen political will, faithfully fulfil their obligations and jointly maintain and implement the Plan of Action.

11. All relevant parties should continue to oppose the development or deployment of nuclear weapons on the Korean Peninsula, earnestly and comprehensively implement relevant Security Council resolutions and the 19 September joint statement. All parties should act in a responsible manner and spend extra effort to alleviate tensions; continue to make joint efforts to pull back the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula, get back to the negotiating table at an early date, and achieve the peaceful settlement of this issue, the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the enduring peace and sustainability of the region via dialogue. To this end, China has raised the "dual-track approach" and "suspension for suspension" proposal; we hope relevant parties can give consideration to them.

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Nuclear disarmament and reducing the danger of nuclear war

Working paper submitted by China

1. Eliminating the danger of nuclear war, and ultimately the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and the attainment of a nuclear-weapon-free world, serve the common interests and benefits of humankind.

2. In the spirit of jointly building a community of shared future for mankind through consultation, the international community should advocate and pursue common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security, fully respect and accommodate the legitimate and reasonable security concerns of all countries, resolve international disputes through peaceful means and work to foster a peaceful and stable international security environment and create the conditions necessary for progress in nuclear disarmament.

3. It is important to adhere to multilateralism, maintain and promote the authority, universality and effectiveness of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and adhere and give full play to the role of the existing multilateral mechanisms, including the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, so as to provide legal support and institutional guarantees for the nuclear disarmament process.

4. At the beginning of a new Non-Proliferation Treaty review cycle, all parties should seize this opportunity, by taking positive measures and enhancing dialogue and mutual trust, to continually implement the action plan , which was adopted by the 2010 Review Conference, in a comprehensive and balanced manner. The relationship between nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be handled properly so that the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty might be upheld in a balanced way.

5. All nuclear-weapon States should be committed to the complete prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons, fulfil their nuclear disarmament obligations under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in earnest and publicly undertake not to seek permanent possession of nuclear weapons.

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6. Nuclear disarmament should follow the principles of "maintaining the global strategic stability" and "undiminished security for all", and be pursued in a step-by-step manner:

(a) Development and deployment of missile defence systems detrimental to global stability, as well as the related international cooperation in this regard, should be stopped and abandoned immediately, so as not to hamper the international nuclear disarmament efforts;

(b) Prevention of the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space will be conducive to maintaining global strategic balance and stability and to creating an international security environment necessary for nuclear disarmament;

(c) It is necessary to strengthen pre-emptive arms control diplomacy and contain the trend of weaponization in the fields of cyberspace and artificial intelligence so as to prevent the high-tech arms race from aggravating the international strategic imbalance.

7. Countries possessing the largest nuclear arsenals bear special and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament and should take the lead in substantially reducing those arsenals in a verifiable, irreversible and legally binding manner, thus creating the conditions necessary for the ultimate goal of general and comprehensive nuclear disarmament. When conditions are ripe, other nuclear-weapon States should also join the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

8. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is an important step in the nuclear disarmament process. Countries that have not yet done so should sign and ratify that Treaty as soon as possible so that it may enter into force as stipulated by its relevant provisions at the earliest opportunity. Pending the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty , nuclear-weapon States should continue to observe their moratoriums on nuclear testing.

9. The Conference on Disarmament is the only appropriate forum for the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Reaching agreement on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament to start the negotiations on fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of the Shannon report (CD/1299) is the only feasible way out. Besides, the universal participation of all key parties is essential for the preparation and negotiation of the treaty to achieve results. The United Nations high-level expert preparatory group on fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices should conduct its work strictly in accordance with its mandate defined in the relevant General Assembly resolution.

10. As a long-term goal, the international community should develop, at the appropriate juncture, a viable long-term plan comprising phased actions, including the conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons so as to eventually achieve complete and thorough nuclear disarmament under effective international supervision by taking concrete and feasible measures.

11. At the current stage, all nuclear-weapon States should take the following measures to reduce the danger of nuclear war and improve the level of mutual trust among States:

(a) To reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security doctrines and abandon the nuclear deterrence policy based on first use of nuclear weapons, commit themselves to no first use of nuclear weapons at any time or under any circumstances;

(b) Honour their commitments not to target their nuclear weapons at any countries or to list any countries as targets of nuclear strikes;

(c) Explicitly undertake unconditionally to commit not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones and to negotiate and conclude international legal instruments on the issues of negative security assurance and no first use of nuclear weapons;

(d) Support the efforts of relevant countries and regions in establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and other weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zones in accordance with the regional conditions and on the basis of voluntary consultations and agreements;

(e) Abandon the nuclear umbrella policy and the practice of nuclear sharing; countries that deploy nuclear weapons abroad should withdraw and repatriate all such weapons;

(f) Take all steps necessary to avoid accidental or unauthorized launches of nuclear weapons.

12. Achieving the universality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and enhancing its authority and effectiveness are of extreme importance. Countries that have not yet done so should unconditionally accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States at an early date. The relevant Security Council resolutions should be implemented in a comprehensive, non-discriminatory and effective manner.